

Message Text

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PAGE 01 EC BRU 01939 011645Z

ACTION EUR-12

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PRIORITY TO DUBLIN ONLY

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TAGS: EEC EFIS PLOS

SUBJECT: IRISH BACK DOWN ON UNILATERAL CONSERVATION MEASURES

REF: (A) EC BRUSSELS 1532 (B) EC BRUSSELS 1319

1. FOLLOWING A FEBRUARY 28 MEETING IN BRUSSELS BETWEEN IRISH FISHERIES MINISTER PADDY DONEGAN AND EC COMMISSIONER GUNDELACH, THE GOI AGREED TO A TWO-WEEK DELAY IN IMPOSITION OF THE UNILATERAL NATIONAL CONSERVATION MEASURES SCHEDULED TO TAKE EFFECT MARCH 1 (REFTEL A). WE HAVE LEARNED FROM AN IRISH PERMDEL SOURCE (MAC UNFRAIDH) THAT COMMISSION OFFICIALS ASKED FOR MORE TIME TO FIND A COMMUNITY SOLUTION AND PRESENTED AN INFORMAL OUTLINE OF NEW PROPOSALS AIMED AT SATISFYING GOI CONCERNS. GUNDELACH IS TO SUBMIT THESE NEW PROPOSALS FORMALLY TO THE COMMISSION ON MARCH 2.

2. MAC UNFRAIDH CHARACTERIZED THE OUTLINED PROPOSALS AS MERITING "CONSIDERATION" AND SAID THAT THE GOI DECISION TO BACK DOWN HAD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 EC BRU 01939 011645Z

BEEN TAKEN PARTLY TO AVOID FURTHER CONFUSION ON THE INTERNAL FISHING FRONT AND PARTLY AS AN EFFORT TO BE HELPFUL TO THE "ONLY GROUP BEING HELPFUL TO IRELAND: THE COMMISSION." MAC UNFRAIDH SAID THAT, ASSUMING COMMISSION APPROVAL MARCH 2, THE REVISED PROPOSALS WILL BE SUBMITTED TO THE NEWLY CREATED HIGH-LEVEL FISHERIES GROUP (REFTEL B) MARCH 3 AND TO THE FOREIGN MINISTERS ON MARCH 8, WITH THE FURTHER POSSIBILITY OF REVIEW BY THE

AGRICULTURE MINISTERS ON MARCH 14-15.

3. IN VIEW OF THE PURELY TENTATIVE NATURE OF GUNDELACH'S NEW PROPOSALS, GOI OFFICIALS IN BRUSSELS ARE AVOIDING ANY BUT THE MOST CAUTIOUS COMMENT FOR THE MOMENT. MAC UNFRAIDH SAID THAT GUNDELACH SPOKE BY TELEPHONE FEBRUARY 28 WITH AILING IRISH FOREIGN MINISTER FITZGERALD, WHO TOOK A POSITIVE VIEW OF THE TALKS.

4. AT A MARCH 1 PRESS BRIEFING, A COMMISSION SPOKESMAN EXPRESSED "SATISFACTION" WITH THE GOI MOVE. HINTON

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